DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 345 005 CE 061 009

AUTHOR Miller, Michael T.; Husmann, Dann E.
TITLE Priority Reading Materials in Vocational Teacher Education: What Students Should Be Reading.
PUB DATE Dec 91
NOTE 14p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Vocational Education Research Association (Los Angeles, CA, December 1991).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Delphi Technique; Educational Research; Higher Education; Needs Assessment; *Preservice Teacher Education; *Reading Materials; Secondary Education; Surveys; *Teacher Attitudes; Teacher Educators; Vocational Education; *Vocational Education Teachers
IDENTIFIERS *Priorities

ABSTRACT

A priority listing of reading materials for students preparing for careers as secondary vocational education teachers was developed by a panel of experts. The Delphi technique was used to collect data from vocational teacher educators in Nebraska higher education institutions. Thirty participants were selected for their experience in teacher education, familiarity with literature in vocational education, and participation in statewide vocational teacher education coordination activities; 27 responded to the first-round mailing. Respondents identified 54 possible reading materials; after checking for duplication, 36 were retained to be rated in the second and third rounds. In these rounds, 23 participants completed usable responses, for a total study response rate of 76 percent. Respondents marked 92 rating changes between the second and third rounds, averaging 4 changes per respondent. Respondents' ratings of reading material ranged from a low of 2.6 to a high of 4.3, with an average rating of 3.5 on a 5-point Likert scale. Of the 36 materials, 20 earned a favorable agreement level over 3.5; only 10 earned an agreement level of 3.75 or greater. Reading materials represented such topics as history, curriculum, current events, and philosophy. For those that received a higher level of agreement, two distinct categories were identified: cognitive development and national efforts. (Appendixes include a list of 10 references and final mean ratings of materials.) (YLB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED345005

Priority Reading Materials in Vocational Teacher Education: What Students Should Be Reading

Dr. Michael T. Miller*
Assistant Professor and Director
Research and Development Unit for Vocational Education

Department of Vocational and Adult Education
530 East Nebraska Hall
University of Nebraska
Lincoln, Nebraska 68588-0553

(402) 472-3337
FAX: (402) 472-5907

Dr. Dann E. Husmann
Assistant Professor

Department of Agricultural Education
300 Agriculture Hall
University of Nebraska
Lincoln, Nebraska 68588-0709

(402) 472-2807
FAX: (402) 472-5863

Running Head: VTE Readings

*Corresponding author.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

M T Miller

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CE 061 009

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Abstract

The role of vocational education within the context of higher education changed dramatically with the passage of Perkins II. Vocational education programs in higher education, however, will continue to play a vital role in how vocational and technical education is offered, namely through teacher education programs. The current investigation was designed to develop an understanding of what students in vocational teacher education programs should be reading. Utilizing a sample of 30 vocational teacher educators in Nebraska, 36 priority reading materials were identified.

The face of vocational education has changed greatly from its early beginnings as an instructional offering focused at preparing the "masses" for a workforce, rather than a broadly interpreted education (Heilbroner, 1960; Roberts, 1965; Venn, 1964). Due largely to the recent passage of the Carl Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act Amendments in 1990, vocational education programs have become focused at the secondary and two-year college level (American Vocational Association, 1990).

Amid the changing focus of vocational education from higher education to secondary and postsecondary institutions, new demands on vocational education teachers are assured, however current lack articulation (Anderson-Yates & Washburn, 1990). In response to this change, higher education must begin to address the new and continuing role of vocational education within their boundaries (Calhoun & Finch, 1976). While the vocational education community awaits federal rules and regulations, the most immediate area of impact for higher education institutions lies in vocational teacher preparation programs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose for conducting this study was to establish a priority listing of reading materials for students preparing for careers as secondary vocational education teachers. The listing, while not interpreted to be definitive, should serve as a forum

for discussion and as a precursor to dialogue on consistency between vocational teacher preparation programs.

Rationale for the Study

Vocational education has a variety of histories, ranging from curricular applications to job training (Miller & Mahler, 1991). Consistent among the diversity of vocational programs, however, has been the need and use of instructional technologies and teacher preparation made available through higher education. The role of higher education has remained at the forefront of vocational education, but has been challenged as never before by the Perkins Legislation of 1990.

The Perkins Legislation provided for a change in focus for the delivery of vocational programs, especially impacting four-year higher education institutions. Through the new funding formula, vocational education becomes concentrated in high school and postsecondary curricula (American Vocational Association, 1990). The impact on higher education programs has yet to be realized, however, at least one aspect is sure to be radically changed: teacher preparation.

Current teacher preparation programs are multifaceted programs targeted at single-class management and instructional and assessment techniques. In the new world of vocational education, the vocational teacher will be required to provide instruction across disciplines, teach, evaluate, and advise throughout consortias, rely on educational agencies different

from higher education for continuing education and in-service work, and will be more responsible for the allocation and spending of federal dollars. In short, the high school vocational teacher has new demands to face, and preparation programs must acknowledge this through curricular reform.

The current investigation was designed to do more than list priority reading materials for vocational teacher education; it was developed to promote the discussion of unifying teacher preparation programs. Through a more unified framework and common standards in teacher preparation programs, vocational high school teachers will be better equipped to group their new expectations with the knowledge that teachers are prepared beyond state certification production and within similar quality programs.

Procedures

Due to the lack of consensus and limited previous research related to standardized curriculum in vocational teacher education, particularly in terms of a reading material list, the Delphi technique was selected for use. The Delphi technique allows for the collection of data from a purposive sample through sequential questionnaires, and is noted as an effective technique in consensus building (Borg & Gall, 1988; Sackman, 1975; Van de Ven & Delbecq, 1974).

The sample selected for use in this investigation included 30 vocational teacher educators in Nebraska higher education

institutions. Participants were selected for their experience in teacher education, familiarity with literature in vocational education, and participation in statewide vocational teacher education coordination activities.

The assumption was made that recommendations from this sample could be applicable to vocational teacher education curricula in other states.

Results

Of the identified sample (n=30), 27 responded to the first round mailing, representing a 90% return rate. Respondents identified a total of 54 possible reading materials for vocational teacher education students, however, after checking for duplication, 36 reading materials remained to be rated in the second and third round of study (see Table 1). For the second and third round of study, 23 participants completed usable responses, for a total study response rate of 76%. Respondents marked 92 rating changes between the second and third round of study, averaging 4 changes per respondent.

Respondents rating of reading materials ranged from a low of 2.6 to a high of 4.3, with an average rating of 3.5 on a 1-5 Likert scale. Of the 36 materials identified, 20 earned an favorable agreement level over 3.5 or greater. Only 10 statements, however, earned an agreement level of 3.75 or greater.

Discussion

The purpose for conducting this study was to identify priority reading materials for students studying to be secondary school vocational teachers. By identifying reading materials of high priority for pre-service teachers, the concept of commonality and consistency in teacher education can be broached on a state-wide level.

Reading materials identified represented a spectrum of topics, ranging from history to curriculum and current events to philosophy. For statements which received a higher level of agreement, that is, those deemed "important," two very distinct categories were identified: cognitive development and national efforts.

Cognitive development: Several readings identified which were highly regarded by respondents as important dealt with the cognitive or content knowledge and development of pre-service teachers. Reading materials included "Unfinished Agenda: The Forgotten Half," "Unfinished Agenda: The Role of Vocational Education in the High School," "Nebraska Technical Education Curriculum Guides," "Critical Thinking, What Every Person Needs to Survive in a Rapidly Changing World," and "Developing Critical Thinkers." All of these reading materials focus on content specific issues and the formulation of cognitive abilities within the framework of vocational education.

National efforts: The majority of reading materials

identified which were deemed important for pre-service teachers focused on current issues, events, and coordination, primarily on a national scale. The "AVA Journal," "School Shop/Tech Directions," and "Phi Delta Kappan" all reflect a need to stay informed on what is happening in vocational education. "Nation at Risk," "Workforce 2000," and "Administration of Vocational Education" were also identified by current vocational teacher educators, and are indicative of a growing need to be informed of how vocational education is offered and coordinated on both the state and national level.

The materials identified and the thematic categories arising from the topics covered are not new to teacher education. New to teacher education, however, is the need to emphasize cognitive development and national issues. The Perkins Legislation forces teacher education to re-conceptualize how pre-service teachers are taught. The materials identified here are merely a reflection of a larger shift in vocational teacher education; a shift toward life-long learning and personalized emphasis on the learner.

The investigation presented provides for a clearer understanding of higher education's new role in vocational education. The new role offers opportunity for system or state wide coordination, unified approaches to student learning and competencies, and an interdisciplinary approach to pre-service teacher preparation.

As the study was completed, a host of related research areas

were identified: common curriculum, multicultural experiences, teacher effectiveness, etc. The intent of this investigation was not meant to be definitive, but rather, to provide a beginning to the new field of higher education's role in vocational education in the post-Perkins era.

References

American Vocational Association. (1990). The AVA guide to the Carl D. Perkins vocational and applied technology education act of 1990. Alexandria, VA: American Vocational Association.

Anderson-Yates, M., & Washburn, J. (1990). A new vocational education act: Priorities for the future. Journal of Studies in Technical Careers, 12(4), 277-283.

Borg, W. R., & Gall, M. d. (1988). Educational research: An introduction (4th ed.). NY: Longman.

Calhoun, C., & Finch, A. (1976). Vocational and career education: Concepts and operations. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Heilbroner, R. L. (1960). The future as history; the historic currents of our time and the direction in which they are taking America. NY: Harper.

Miller, M. T., & Mahler, M. C. (1991). Higher education's role in improving education: Identifying key strategies. Lincoln, NE: University Council for Vocational Education.

Roberts, R. W. (1965). Vocational and practical arts education (2nd ed). NY: Harper and Row.

Sackman, H. (1975). Delphi critique. Lexington, MA: DC Health.

Van De Ven, A. H., & Delbecq, A. L. (1974). The effectiveness of nominal, Delphi, and interacting group decision making processes. Academy of Management Journal, 17(4), 605-621.

Venn, G. (1964). Man, education, and work. Washington, DC: American Council on Education.

Table 1.

Final Mean Ratings of Reading Material Identified

Reading Material	Final Mean Ranking
Carl Perkins Legislation of 1990	4.3
AVA Journal	4.2
Unfinished Agenda: The Forgotten Half	4.1
Nebraska Technical Education Curriculum Guides	4.09
Unfinished Agenda: The Role of Vocational Education in the High School	4.07
School Shop/Tech Directions	4.0
Critical Thinking, What Every Person Needs to Survive in a Rapidly Changing World	3.92
Administration of Vocational Education	3.9
Phi Delta Kappan	3.8
Developing Critical Thinkers	3.76
Workforce 2000	3.7
Nation at Risk	3.7
Transition from School to Work: Linking Education and Worksite Training	3.7
National Center for Research Study Reports	3.7
ASCD Journal	3.6
Principles and a Philosophy for Vocational Education	3.6
Education and Training for the World of Work	3.5
Cooperation in the Classroom	3.5
Learning Together and Alone: Cooperative, Competitive and Individualist Learning	3.5
Teaching Industrial Education	3.4
Strategic Planning Workbook	3.4
Looking in Classrooms	3.38
Vocational Education Act of 1963 and Amendments of 1968	3.3
Five Basic Orientations to the Curriculum: The Educational Imagination: On the Design and Evaluation of School Programs	3.3
ITEA Magazine	3.3
Smith-Hughes Act	3.2
Foundations of Vocational Education	3.2
History of Industrial Education	3.2

Table 1, continued.

Final Mean Ratings of Reading Material Identified

Reading Material	Final Mean Reading
Thriving on Chaos: Handbook for Management	3.18
The Vocational Administrators Survival Guide	3.18
Concepts in Vocational Education	3.18
Secondary School Teaching Methods	3.0
Connections	3.0
Nebraska Council on Vocational Education Series	2.9
The Day the Universe Changed	2.6